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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants acknowledge with gratitude the Examiner's comments during a telephonic conversation on December 2, 2004.

It was noticed that a newly filed claim in Applicants' amendment filed September 10, 2004 inadvertently misstated the claim number as Claim 34. The newly added claim should be Claim 39. Correction is respectfully requested.

Further, following the Examiner's suggestion, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite a two-step process. Accordingly, claims 8, 10-13, 15, and 25 have been amended for clarity. These amendments do not add new matter, are intended to clarify the claims, and are not intended to limit their scope.

Entry of the amendment and allowance of claims 1-8, 10-33, and 39 is respectfully requested.

Applicants request the Examiner to consider the following remarks in light of the newly amended claims.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-8, and 10-38 are pending in the application. New claim 39 has been added. The status of the claims is as follows: Claims 3-7, 14, 16, and 18-21 (original), claims 1, 2, 8, 10-13, 15, 17, and 22-33 (currently amended), claim 34 (canceled), claims 34-38 (withdrawn), and claim 39 (new).

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested. Once the Notice of Allowance is received, Applicants will cancel claims 34-38.

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If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Ruppert", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Siegfried J. Ruppert, Ph.D.
Reg. No. 44,312

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, 8th Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: 415-576-0200
Fax: 415-576-0300

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